

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ▼**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES ENTERPRISE**

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**PSYCHIATRIC SECURITY SPECIALIST**

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**DEFINITION**

Assists mental health staff in therapeutic work and performs a wide range of security functions in creating a maximally therapeutic environment for the care and treatment of sex offenders with mental abnormalities and/or personality disorders that have been civilly committed directly from prison to the CCUSO (Civil Commitment Unit for Sexual Offenders) program; performs related work as required.

**The Work Examples and Competencies listed are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.**

**WORK EXAMPLES**

Provides care and treatment of patients by implementing program policies and procedures and by assisting in the conduct of therapeutic activities in coordination with professional staff; provides advice, psychological support, and direction to patients; interacts with patients in a therapeutic manner, refraining from making unprofessional comments or displaying unprofessional behaviors and attitudes in the presence of other patients and nonprogram staff; maintains strict confidentiality with regard to personal disclosures and patient matters, in accordance with Department of Human Services (DHS) policies.

Performs essential security functions such as conducting unit counts, maintaining order and discipline on the unit; supervises patient phone usage; supervises visitations; permits only incidental contact with inmates; conducts room and body searches as necessary; assists in the restraint of disruptive patients according to institutional policies; examines patients, packages, and mail for contraband; follows institutional security procedures in order to minimize the risk of patient escape; operates telephone systems and two-way radios; enforces program rules and issues verbal/written warnings or behavior reports.

Observes and accurately records information relating to each patient's behavior, comments, attitudes in the patient's treatment record; attends and interacts appropriately in group therapy sessions in conjunction with the group facilitator's directions; participates in activity therapy activities in order to model and teach good leisure and social skills, and to observe the patients' behavior as much as possible; documents significant patient behavior, comments, and observations in a timely and accurate way.

Escorts patients to activities, dining hall, medical appointments, recreation, school or other areas while minimizing conversation with inmates.

Attends treatment team meetings in order to provide information relative to a patient's behavior, comments, attitudes, and treatment progress; participates in treatment team discussions and patient reviews; shares observations and contributes to the objective evaluation of each patients' progress in achieving therapeutic goals.

Performs housekeeping and unit management duties or supervises the performance of such duties by patients as required in order to maintain an orderly and clean program area.

Completes all required Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Human Services (DHS), and treatment program forms accurately and thoroughly.

**COMPETENCIES REQUIRED**

Knowledge of the legal complexities and the emotional impact of civil commitment procedures upon patients committed indefinitely for treatment for sex offending propensities.

Knowledge of the difficulties associated with modifying the thinking and self-esteem of sexual offenders in a correctional setting.

Knowledge of the methods and procedures used to maintain treatment records.

Knowledge of DOC, DHS, and program policies and procedures.

Knowledge of basic first aid.

Ability to read and write the English language to write clear reports with correct spelling, grammar, logical sequences, and sentence structure using personal computer skills.

Ability to interact therapeutically with patients without violating essential professional boundaries.

Ability to use good judgment in applying behavior management procedures in order to maintain good control of patient living units.

Ability to read, understand and apply written orders, rules, regulations and policies.

Ability to accurately observe and report pertinent details in a variety of situations involving patients, staff, or visitors.

Ability to learn new assignments quickly and to adapt to change.

Ability to recognize emergencies and dangerous situations and to respond appropriately.

Ability to physically respond to emergencies quickly and to restrain patients as required.

Ability to maintain a professional, caring, therapeutic attitude toward patients after learning details of their personal offense history and after observing them behave in provoking ways.

Ability to hear conversations being conducted in a normal volume, and to be able to detect and distinguish between normal and abnormal sounds in the institution.

Ability to provide clear instruction regarding program rules and appropriate social behavior to patients, both individually and in groups.

Ability to see sufficiently well to identify patients at a reasonable distance, to observe details of incidents, and to perform inspections and searches.

Ability to remain on alert while on duty.

Ability to maintain strict confidentiality with regard to patient disclosures and patient information, in accordance with DHS policies, sharing information only with those who have a need to know.

Ability to attend and contribute appropriately to group therapy and treatment team discussions whenever possible, following the lead of the group facilitator.

Ability to use caution and good judgment about patient behavior in order to minimize the risk of escapes and injuries.

Displays high standards of ethical conduct. Exhibits honesty and integrity. Refrains from theft-related, dishonest or unethical behavior.

Works and communicates with internal and external clients and customers to meet their needs in a polite, courteous, and cooperative manner. Committed to quality service.

Displays a high level of initiative, effort and commitment towards completing assignments efficiently. Works with minimal supervision. Demonstrates responsible behavior and attention to detail.

Responds appropriately to supervision. Follows policy and cooperates with supervisors.

Aligns behavior with the needs, priorities and goals of the organization.

Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity. Fosters commitment and team spirit.

Expresses information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information. Listens to others and responds appropriately.

### **EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, AND SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Graduation from high school or GED and experience equal to two years of full time work that involved direct contact with people in a therapeutic role or overseeing incarcerated adults or juveniles;

OR

an equivalent combination of qualifying experience and education substituting 30 semester hours of accredited post high school education with major emphasis in the social or behavioral sciences for each year of the required experience.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Satisfactory completion of security training and treatment program training.

Includes satisfactory completion of:

- a background investigation
- formal training courses after appointment

Effective Date: 3/05 JG